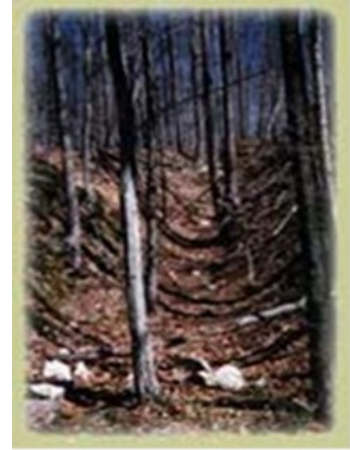# HISTORICAL SITES

Monroe Park

Fauquier County's gold mining history dates back to the early 1800's. Miners looking to exploit the gold belt that runs through Virginia applied to the state legislature for over 100 mining companies between 1832 and 1861. Of these companies, the Franklin Mine was the most famous in Fauquier County. This mine produced 1.2 million dollars worth of gold from 1825 until the Civil War. Various techniques for extracting gold were used in Fauquier County, including panning, placer, open-pit, and deep shaft mining.

The Gold Mining Camp Museum at Monroe Park, in Goldvein, Virginia, celebrates Fauquier County's mining heritage and has been declared the Official Gold Mining Interpretive Center of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Museum consists of three buildings: an Assay Office, Mess Hall, and a Bunk House. These buildings re-create a typical mining camp in Fauquier County from the early 20th Century and house artifacts from various Virginia mines and show the daily life of an miner. The museum is open on Wednesdays through Saturdays from 9:30 am until 5:00 pm and on Sunday,12:00 pm - 4:00 pm. Starting in March and ending in November, free gold panning demonstrations (weather permitting) are available Wednesday to Sunday at 2:00 pm, with an additional demonstration on Saturday at 10:00 am. For more information, visit the museum's website at www.goldvein.com or call the park office at (540) 422-8170.

Mining Trench left at the Franklin Mine

Warrenton Branch Greenway

This popular walking, jogging, and biking trail in downtown Warrenton was constructed over an abandoned railway line which has its own unique history.

The Warrenton Branch was a part of the Orange and Alexandria Railroad that was supposed to link its namesakes while passing through each county seat along the way. The plan to pass through Warrenton was abandoned because of the steep grades around the town. The residents of Warrenton were outraged and demanded that they have a railroad stop in their town. The Warrenton Branch was offered as a compromise and ran from Calverton to Warrenton.

During the Civil War, the Warrenton Branch became a supply line for both Union and Confederate troops, as well as a scene for several battles. John S. Mosby and his raiders were involved in several of these battles, including an ill-fated raid on May 3, 1863. Mosby returned to his law practice in1865 and received an appointment as U.S. Consul in Hong Kong and other government posts in the 1868 and 1872 elections. When he died in 1916 his body was carried back to Warrenton to be buried by this same line.

The Warrenton Depot

The Warrenton Branch was at its height in the early 20th century, but by 1948 the line was no longer in steady use and the Warrenton station was falling into disrepair. From the 1950s to the 1980s, the line saw ever dwindling traffic until it was abandoned in 1988.

Today, the section of the Warrenton Branch that ran through downtown Warrenton from the depot to Rt. 29 has been converted into a walking, jogging, and biking path. Indications of its history can still be seen in the depot building, which stands today as a restaurant, and the red caboose which sits at the side of the trail and is cared for by the Friends of the Warrenton Caboose. The caboose is open for public tours. The trail is open daily from dawn to dusk.
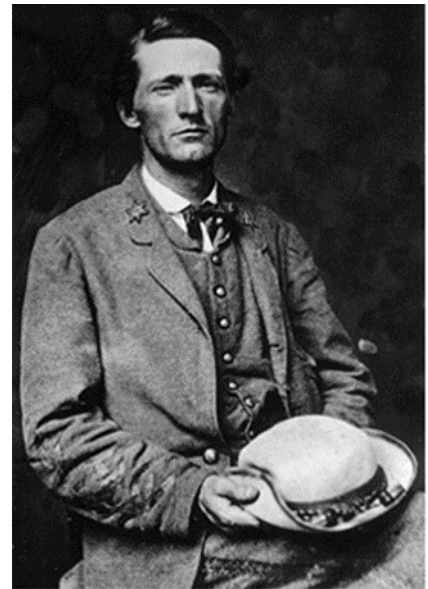
A trench left behind by the Franklin Mine

Upperville Park

Civil War fighting took place in and around the village of Upperville. The Route 50 Corridor is today known as "Mosby Country" because of his numerous activities along the road. Some of his more famous exploits and battles took place at the nearby towns of Aldie and Middleburg.

The most famous battle in Upperville, however, took place in the days leading up to the Battle of Gettysburg. In June of 1863, the area played host to many battles between Union and Confederate troops. Most of the battles were efforts by the Confederates, led by General J.E.B Stuart, to ensure General Robert E. Lee's troops safe passage to Pennsylvania. In the end, the efforts proved successful and Lee's troops completed their march through the Shenandoah Valley unscathed and continued on to Gettysburg.

The Battle of Upperville was particularly bloody and resulted in heavy casualties for both sides, both men and horses. Federal Col. William Doster reflected on the battle by saying: "As we ride through the high road, it is mournful to see the heaps of dead blue and gray…" Many of the soldiers that fought and survived this battle would go on to meet again at Gettysburg.

John Singleton Mosby

Today, the site is commemorated with a historical marker that stands in Upperville Park. Across the street is a cemetery in which are buried some of the casualties of that battle, including native resident J. Warren Brent. More information about the battles, as well as a self-guided tour through the area can be found at http://www.civilwartraveler.com/

Vint Hill Village Green

Built in 1942 by the U. S. Army, Vint Hill Farms Station was used to develop and implement highly sensitive electronics and surveillance systems. When the first soldiers of the 2nd Signal Service Battalion arrived at the farm in June 1942, they established the Army's first large field station, known simply as "Monitoring Station No. 1," in the "Barns".

The Army built more than 500,000 square feet of office and warehouse space and all the amenities to make it a self-sufficient community including some sports facilities.

The Department of Defense closed Vint Hill's in September 1997 and the Fauquier County Parks and Recreation Department acquired the recreational facilities in 2001. The Community Center and Park began operation that same year.

Named Vint Hill Village Green, the facility brought some significant "firsts" to Fauquier County. A partial list includes:
 First public gym
 First lighted tennis courts
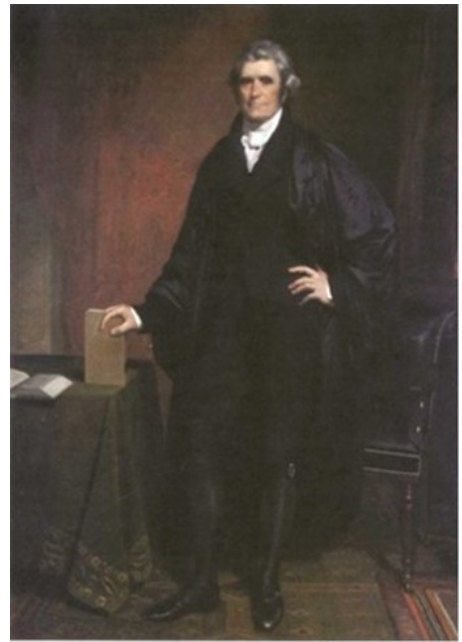 First lighted outdoor basketball courts
 First public racquet ball courts

The transition is now complete and Fauquier County Parks and Recreation continues to make improvements to the facilities available.

John Marshall Birthplace Park

John Marshall, future Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, was born in a log cabin on September 24, 1755 to Thomas Marshall and Mary Randolph Keith. He was the eldest of 15 children born to this family, who made their home in Germantown, near modern-day Midland, which at the time was considered the edge of the American frontier.

John Marshall served his country as a Culpeper Minuteman during the Revolutionary war and studied law at William and Mary. He was a member of the Virginia State Assembly, in which he represented Fauquier County, and the United States House of Representatives, among numerous other political posts. He was appointed to the office of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court in 1801 during the Presidency of John Adams. He would go on to serve on the Supreme Court for thirty-four years.

Marshall is perhaps best known for his decisions while serving as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. He was the first justice to establish the right of judicial review, in his most famous decision, Marbury v. Madison.

Chief Justice John Marshall

The John Marshall Birthplace Park became Fauquier County's first public park in the late 1970s. By that time, two markers had been placed on the property by two separate legal fraternities. The first marker was erected in 1902 by Phi Delta Phi, a legal fraternity of George Washington University. A second marker enclosed the previous one and was unveiled in 1928.

**View of Encampment, Rappahannock Station
Source: Library of Congress**

Rappahannock Station

Situated near a railroad and on the banks of the Rappahannock River, the area which is designated for the proposed Rappahannock Station Park was the site of two significant Civil War battles.

The first battle came in August of 1862 during the Second Manassas Campaign. General Robert E. Lee's troops engaged in several small battles with the army of General John Pope along the river. The Union troops protected their bridgehead with the installation of artillery on a knoll. A second battle occurred on November 7, 1863. General Lee had withdrawn his troops beyond the Rappahannock River, intending to use the river as a defensible line throughout the winter.

Major General John Sedgwick and Major General William French of the Union Army foiled Lee's plans and attacked. The result was a stunning Union victory that was much bemoaned by the Confederate troops. Lee gathered what was left of his forces and marched them south for fear of becoming pinned against the Rapidan River. At the end of the fighting, 1670 Confederate troops were killed as opposed to 419 Union troops.

The Fauquier County Parks and Recreation department acquired the land after interest was expressed by a developer in creating a subdivision there. Thanks to the actions of the Piedmont Environmental Council and the Fauquier County Government, the core of the battlefield was preserved from development and there are plans to create a park on this land. For more information on the battle, or to follow the National Park Service's tour of the battlefield, please go to http://www.nps.gov/frsp/rapp.htm.
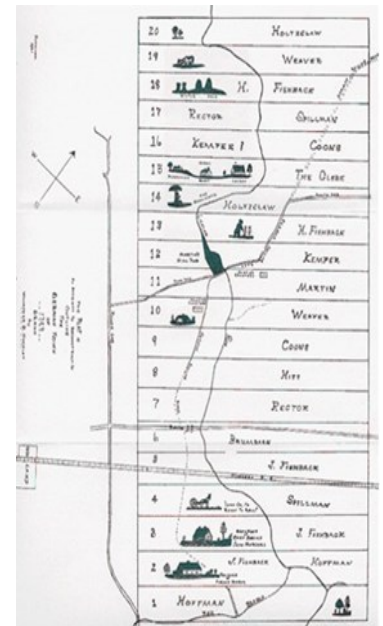
Germantown

Germantown was Fauquier County's first permanent settlement. It was founded by German miners brought to the Rappahannock River valley by Alexander Spotswood, then lieutenant governor of Virginia, in the early 1700's to excavate iron ore found on his property. As the name suggests, it was home to a large group of German immigrants whose names survive in the County today. Common Fauquier names such as Fishback, Rector, Kemper, and Hitt all date back to this early settlement.

In 1718, a deed was signed by these early families granting them land along the Licking Run. The lots were divided among 19 different families, with the 20th lot being left open for a church and parsonage. Each lot was situated such that the Licking Run would run through each property at some point. The modern-day boundaries of this settlement are Meetze Road along the northeast and Germantown Road along the southwest.

The settlers, at least until the American Revolution, made their fortune growing and selling tobacco. As the economy of the country changed, however, the Germantown families soon turned to growing corn and wheat and raising livestock. The population of Germantown shifted around during the 1800s, following the popularity of the new Warrenton Road.

In 1985, the United States Soil Conservation Service dammed up the Licking Run to help control flooding and created Fauquier County's largest body of water. It was along this lake in 1987 that Crockett Park was created, so named for Charlie Mitchell Crockett who donated money to purchase the land needed for the park. Crockett's wife was a descendent of the original Weaver family who had settled in Germantown. The lake located in Crockett Park was named Germantown Lake in honor of that early settlement. More can be learned about early German settlements at www.germanna.org/history.html.

Outline of the German Town of 1729, reconstructed
by Woodford B. Hackley (1961).
© *Memorial Foundation of*
the Germanna Colonies in Virginia, Inc.

School House # 18

Following the American Civil War, the State of Virginia adopted a new constitution which contained a provision for the creation of a system of "free public schools." Many of those first "public schools" were identified by number, not by name. So it was with School House # 18. The Schoolhouse #18 building was constructed in 1887 on land donated by the Shackleford family. Built during the days of segregation, the school housed only white students from 1887 until 1910.

In 1910 the white student population was moved to the "new" school located on the site of the present day Marshall Community Center. Occupying #18 after 1910 were the African-American students of that area. The historic old site remained a school for the African-American population until its closing in 1964 when the student body was relocated to the present day Claude Thompson Elementary School near Rectortown. School House #18 is on the National Register of Historic Places as a Virginia Historic Landmark.

School House #18 is located at 7592 East Main Street, Marshall, VA, adjacent to the new Northern Fauquier Community Park. Park grounds are open from dawn to dusk. Additional tours can be arranged by calling the Northern Fauquier Community Park at (540) 422-8570.

Vint Hill Theater

The Vint Hill Theater is a rare surviving example of a venue designed for a single-screen cinema. The theater is historically significant for both architectural design and for its war-time association with the Vint Hill Farms Station army base.

The theater was likely built in the 1940s during a build-up military housing at the base. It was certainly in existence in 1952 as evidenced by historical aerial photography. Vint Hill Farms Station was the site of the Army's WWII cryptologic training school and the Army's first large field signal station known as "Monitoring Station No. 1."[1] The school trained army personnel in cryptanalytic, traffic analytic and cryptographic equipment maintenance. Soon after the Vint Hill Farm was purchased in 1942, operations began in the former dairy barn to intercept radio communications.[2] Operations continued through the Cold War era.

Aware of the possibility of morale problems due to living conditions, health, and fatigue, the Army made efforts to create opportunities for leisure activities, including organized baseball games and boxing matches.[3] The Vint Hill Theater may have been constructed to facilitate higher morale.

The architecture of the theater building is characterized by its projecting facade and parapet topped with a large horizontal sign spelling "THEATER." A marquee below the sign advertises showings. The brick building is rectangular in plan with a flat roof.
The storefront windows have historically significant aluminum frames. Although aluminum windows appear in the early 1900s, it wasn't until after WWII when aluminum windows gained more widespread use. The exterior ticket windows, which are character-defining features, contribute to the significance of the building.

The interior of the theater features a full stage with a curved proscenium. The theater seating, which appears to be early if not original, are arranged in slightly curving rows typical for this type of venue. The auditorium's original sloping concrete floor remains intact.

In the rear wall of the auditorium is the window to the projection booth. A film projector in the booth would have projected movies through the window to a screen at the stage.

With a shift to multiplex cinemas in the late-20th century, many single-screen cinema theaters were unable to compete and closed. More recently, smaller theaters struggling to afford expensive digital projectors are at risk.

The Vint Hill Theater retains its historical integrity through preservation of its original character- defining features. Its continued use as a community venue adds to the retention of its historical character.

Source:
1 David P. Mowry, _Vint Hill Farms Station,_ as viewed at https://www.nsa.gov/public_info/_files/crypto_almanac_50th/Vint_Hill_Farms_Station.pdf
2 James L. Gilbert and John P. Finnegan, editors, U.S. Ary Signals Intelligence in World War II: A Documentary History, Center of Military History, United States Army, Washington, D. C. , U.S. Government Printing Office,